

3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Cultural resources include historical or archaeological objects, sites, buildings, structures, districts, or traditional cultural properties. Significant historic properties include those sites or objects that are listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (National Register). The Project Area is within the Colorado prehistoric context for the Platte River Basin (Gilmore et al. 1999) and the Plains Historic Context (Mehls 1984) of the Colorado Resource Protection Planning Process (RP-3). A Class III pedestrian survey for cultural resources within the existing transmission line ROW was conducted to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Greystone 2001) and is summarized in **Section 3.4.4**.

3.4.1 Prehistoric Context

The Proposed Project is at the western edge of the Colorado Piedmont of the Plains physiographic province where it meets the Hogbacks/Foothills zone. Like many other regions, the vast majority of cultural resources recorded in this region are known only from surface evidence and lack temporally diagnostic artifacts or other evidence of age or cultural affiliation. Early human settlement is firmly documented in the chronology summarized below (Gilmore et al. 1999):

- Paleoindian Stage--12,040 to 5740 B.C. Characterized by kills sites and game processing sites; tool assemblages consist of chipped stone tools -- dart points and specialized hide-processing tools -- used in hunting of large animals, primarily now-extinct megafauna such as mammoth, *Bison antiquus*, camels, and sloth.
- Archaic Stage--5500 B.C. to A.D.150. Time of changing environment that necessitated modifications of the preceding lifestyle to the warmer, drier conditions; resulted in intensive foraging of plant resources and hunting of deer and smaller game; grinding stones and a general decrease in the size of dart points; both open sites and rockshelters, and features such as firepits, storage cists, and architectural structures.
- Late Prehistoric Stage--A.D. 150 to 1540. Known as Early and Middle Ceramic periods or Plains Woodland; characterized by a change in technology, subsistence, trade, and demographics; marked by the appearance of pottery and the bow-and-arrow, with small corner-notched projectile points that were hafted to arrows; appearance of cord-marked and polished ceramics indicates the development of gardening or horticulture, with pots used to store both wild plants and cultigens; open sites, rock shelters, and various forms of architecture, usually low stone walls.
- Protohistoric Stage--A.D. 1540 to 1860. Defined by the date that Coronado expedition entered the Southwest (1540) and ends with the period permanent settlement by literate peoples, or the beginning of the Historic period (Clark in Gilmore et al. 1999); includes influxes of historically recognized Indian tribes, such as Apache, Comanche, Arapaho, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Ute, and other groups to the area; open camps, rockshelters, and architectural sites; artifacts include a combination of traditional hunting, gathering, and horticultural items combined with later European contact articles.

3.4.2 Traditional Cultural Properties

Principal traditional claims to the South Platte River catchment and the adjacent Foothills in the nineteenth century, prior to the removal of Native American populations, were by the Cheyenne, Arapaho, and Ute. Other Plains Indian groups, including the Southern Cheyenne, Lakota, Comanche, Kiowa, Plains Apache, and Kiowa-Apache, were also present in this area historically, and may have legitimate claim to traditional religious or cultural properties in the project vicinity.

Sacred sites in the Platte River Basin are grouped into three broad categories (McBride in Gilmore et al. 1999):

- Traditional cultural properties (TCPs)
- Sites with intangible spiritual attributes
- Contemporary use areas designated for prayer, wild plant gathering, hunting, and offerings.

Native American use areas, sacred areas, and TCPs must, under federal law, be considered as potentially significant and evaluated for eligibility for the inclusion in National Register. Consultation with Native American tribes that may have geographic or cultural associations with the Project Area is required.

3.4.3 Historic Context

The Project Area is within the Colorado Plains Historic Context (Mehls 1984) of the RP-3. Among those themes relevant to the Project Area are exploration, fur trade, territorial expansion, mineral exploration and mining, development of transportation networks, agriculture, irrigation, ranching, and lumbering.

This region was within the fringes of Spanish and French intrusions as early as the mid-sixteenth century, but there are no first-hand written accounts and no resources attributable to Spanish or French exploration until the early Rocky Mountain fur trade period and US exploration in the region in the early nineteenth century. With the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, American interest in the West crystallized. For the next several decades a series of government and private expeditions were sent into the region, and rival fur companies, mostly American and British, entered the region. French and Indians from the eastern woodlands, such as Iroquois and Delaware, were well represented among the trappers in the Rocky Mountain fur trade. The waterways of the plains, such as the Cache la Poudre River, became important travel corridors early in the fur trade, and later gold rush and emigrant routes followed these same corridors. Trading posts and forts became the core of the first permanent Euroamerican settlements in the region. For example, Antonie Jarvis built a cabin on the Cache la Poudre River near what was to become Fort Collins in the 1840s.

Early expeditions, such as those by Zebulon Pike in 1806 and Major Stephen H. Long in 1820, charted the region; however, Euroamerican influx into Colorado began in earnest with the discovery of gold. Gold was first discovered in 1850 by Lewis Ralston, who panned gravel at the

confluence of Clear Creek and Ralston Creek. The strikes in the early 1850s were largely overshadowed by the California gold rush (Mehls 1984). However, the financial depression that followed the Panic of 1857 changed public attitudes, and by 1859 thousands of people were pouring into the Rocky Mountain gold fields. Skirmishes with the Plains Indians escalated almost immediately, and by 1864 the US Army was building permanent forts along the South Platte Trail. Camp (later Fort) Collins was one of these fortifications.

The South Platte Trail branched from the Overland Trail near Julesburg and was the most used of the early trails to the Central Rocky Mountains. This route was also used by several of the early stage companies in the region. The route split again near Fort Morgan with one branch going west-southwesterly to Denver and a second proceeding northwesterly along the Cache la Poudre River to Fort Collins and on through Virginia Dale to rejoin the Overland Trail.

By the late 1860s construction of the Union Pacific and Kansas Pacific Railroads into the region largely replaced travel along the earlier trails, and by 1870, the Kansas Pacific and the Denver Pacific railroads had reached Denver. The principal railroad corridors, such as the Union Pacific and the Colorado and Southern Railroads, remain in use and continue to play important historic and economic roles in the region.

With the establishment of the railroad corridors and the removal of the Indians in the region, travel became less treacherous, and rural settlement away from the boom towns increased. Ranching and agriculture became important elements along the Front Range. Several agricultural colonies were founded in northeastern Colorado, one of which was the Mercer Colony, established near Fort Collins in 1869. A second more successful colony was General Robert Cameron's Agricultural Colony founded in 1872. This colony eventually absorbed the Mercer Colony. With agriculture came irrigation systems. The earliest doctrine for western prior appropriation water rights came out of a fight over water in 1874 when irrigators in Fort Collins took nearly all the flow from the Cache la Poudre River, leaving the Union Colony lands near Greeley dry (Mehls 1984). After 1900, the sugar beet industry prospered and brought many immigrants to the area. Dryland farming continued into the 1930s when farms began to fail in the Great Depression and tax sales led to violence in Larimer and Sedgwick Counties.

After the passage of the Pre-emption Act of 1841, the Homestead Act of 1862, the Timber Culture Act of 1873, and the Desert Land Act of 1877, ranchers established cattle and sheep ranches. The foothills regions of Larimer County in particular became an area of sheep ranching in the 1870s and 1880s. Fort Collins became a center for lamb finishing and trails to that market were developed. Both agriculture and ranching suffered with the severe winters of the late 1880s and the drought of the 1890s. Ranchers faced the same problems as other agrarians into the 20th century. Government aid under Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal policy provided some relief.

Lumber, or the lack thereof, was a problem on the Great Plains. In some areas of the Front Range, especially in the foothills of Larimer County, a sizable timber industry developed. During the 1870s, the tributaries of the Cache la Poudre River were dammed and the ponds were filled with logs. During the spring runoff, the dams were breached and the lumber floated downstream to Fort Collins to rail lines such as the Union Pacific.

Fort Collins continues to be a center for surrounding agrarian communities. Colorado State University was founded as Colorado Agricultural College in 1870 and continues to act as a principal state university.

3.4.4 Existing Resources

A files search for previously recorded sites was conducted by the Colorado Historical Society Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (OAHP) on August 23, 2000. It showed that at least 20 projects have been conducted within the sections containing or adjacent to the Fort Collins to Rawhide Energy Station Generation Plant 115kV line. The projects include primarily historic architectural surveys and surveys for small highway-related projects, plus a survey of the Rawhide Energy Station location. A search of the General Land Office (GLO) records for the sections containing the line was also performed. The earliest patent date found was 1862.

A total of 277 sites have been recorded within the sections containing the Proposed Project as a result of projects that have been conducted. A summary of the site types is included in **Table 3-6**.

Although the information has not been accessioned into the OAHP database, Western provided data on the LaPorte Tap to Poudre Substation and the Poudre Substation to Richards Lake Tap segments of the line as a historic resource. Several segments of Western's wooden H-frame system are greater than 50 years of age and have been recorded as linear resources. The 2.3-mile LaPorte Tap to Poudre Substation segment was recorded as site 5LR9456 in 1998. The line was constructed in 1951 to 1952. The Poudre Substation to Richards Lake Tap segment, constructed in 1951, was recorded as site 5LR9457 in 1998. Both segments were constructed as part of the Flatiron-Fort Collins-Cheyenne Tap line, which was a segment in the power distribution facilities of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project. The Tap was a tie line between the Flatiron Power Plant, which was the power control center of the project, and the power system of the North Platte River District. It also provided a power supply point at the Fort Collins Substation to the Poudre Valley R.E.A. with a future supply point for the City of Fort Collins. The line has been in service since that time and most power generated by the project is now marketed as part of the Pick-Sloan Missouri River Basin Program. The construction of these two segments is not considered unique, and their functions are not considered crucial for the construction and operation of the Colorado-Big Thompson Project. Consequently neither segment is considered eligible for the National Register.

Approximately 9 percent of the recorded sites are aboriginal scatters of flaked stone artifacts, groundstone artifacts, ceramic sherds, and/or stone features. Most of these sites appear to be associated with hunting and gathering, food processing, and ceremonial activities.

The area north of LaPorte is known to contain large concentrations of stone circles assumed to be the remains of campsites or ceremonial sites. Approximately 91 percent of the recorded sites are aboriginal scatters of flaked stone artifacts, groundstone artifacts, ceramic sherds, and/or stone features. Most of these sites appear to be associated with hunting and gathering, food processing, and ceremonial activities. Approximately 91 percent of the sites are historic. Residences and commercial properties are the most common historic site type within the city and suburban areas, and canals or ditches are the most common historic site type north of Fort Collins, followed by trash dumps, farmsteads, and ranch features. Most of the sites date from the late 1800s to 1930s.

Three historic districts [Old Town, Midtown (a.k.a. Laurel School), and Buckingham] are within the sections containing the corridor; however, the corridor does not cross any of the three. Ninety-nine of the sites are considered eligible for or are actually listed in the National Register or State Register of Historic Properties. Ten sites need more data collected before a National Register determination can be made.

**TABLE 3-6
Cultural Resource Sites**

Previously Recorded Site Types	Number of Sites	NRHP/State Register Eligibility Status
Prehistoric/Lithic (chipped stone) Scatter	12	Eligible – 0 Not Eligible – 5 Need Data – 5 Unknown – 2
Prehistoric/Camp/Stone Circle	12	Eligible – 1 Not Eligible – 2 Need Data – 1 Unknown – 8
Historic/Structure	243	Eligible – 94 Not Eligible – 141 Need Data – 4 Unknown – 4
Historic/Ditch/Canal	9	Eligible – 4 Not Eligible – 5
Historic/Stone Inscription	1	Unknown – 1
TOTAL	277	Eligible – 99 Not Eligible – 153 Need Data – 10 Unknown – 15

Source: OAHF 2000.

At least 10 of the previously recorded sites are located within approximately 500 feet of the centerline of the existing line. Two of these sites (the Coy/Hoffman Barn and the Rex Branch of the Colorado Southern/Burlington Northern Railroad) are listed on the National Register or State Register of Historic Properties or are eligible for the National Register. The remaining sites are not eligible for the National Register.

A Class III pedestrian survey of the ROW was conducted to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Greystone 2001). In addition to the previously recorded sites listed above, 14 new sites and eight isolated finds were recorded during the survey, and eight sites that had been previously recorded were relocated or had new segments recorded. The newly

recorded sites consist of prehistoric lithic scatters, prehistoric or protohistoric stone circles, a rail spur, and previously unrecorded segments of historic ditches or irrigation features. Of the 14 newly recorded sites, two of the prehistoric sites are considered eligible for the National Register. In addition, two newly recorded segments of two historic ditches (Lake Canal Ditch and Poudre Valley Canal) are considered eligible for the National Register.